

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13

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R 271001Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2195

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MANILA

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BANGKOK FOR DEA

MANILA FOR AID

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, BM

SUBJ: NARCOTICS CONTROL -- BELL REPRESENTATIVES PRAISE BURMESE
HELICOPTER UTILIZATION

1. THREE BELL HELICOPTER CORP. REPRESENTATIVES (REGIONAL
MANAGER SHAFFER DAY, SENIOR TEST PILOT WAYNE SPILKER, AND
FIELD SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN ELBEN) VISITED RANGOON
APRIL 24-26 ON THE INVITATION OF THE BURMA AIR FORCE. THEY
HAD A DAY-LONG MEETING WITH APPROPRIATE AIR FORCE OFFICERS
TO DISCUSS UTILIZATION, MAINTENANCE, AND OTHER TECHNICAL
MATTERS RELATED TO THE 12 BELL 205 HELICOPTERS PROVIDED
THUS FAR UNDER THE NARCOTICS CONTROL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

2. THE BELL REPRESENTATIVES WERE UNANIMOUS IN THEIR
PRAISE OF THE BURMESE TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES AND PERFORMANCE
ON THE HELICOPTERS, WHICH THEY TERMED GOOD BY ANY STANDARD
AND TRULY EXCELLENT FOR THIS PART OF THE WORLD. THEY
FOUND NO SERIOUS PROBLEMS OF ANY KIND.

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3. FOLLOWING ARE THE PRINCIPAL SPECIFIC POINTS THE BELL REPRESENTATIVES RELATED TO EMBOFF:

- ELEVEN OF THE 12 HELICOPTERS ARE CURRENTLY OPERATIONAL. ONE IS DEADLINED BECAUSE OF A BROKEN WIND-SHIELD, WHICH IS ON ORDER.
- AVERAGE FLYING TIME FOR THE HELICOPTERS IS MORE THAN 40 HOURS PER AIRCRAFT PER MONTH. THE BELL PEOPLE CONSIDERED THIS AN OUTSTANDING UTILIZATION RECORD, SAYING THAT ON THE BASIS OF THEIR EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE IN ASIA WITH HELICOPTERS ON SIMILAR MISSIONS THEY HAD EXPECTED TO FIND ONLY ABOUT 15 HOURS PER MONTH UTILIZATION.
- IN ADDITION TO THE DEADLINED AIRCRAFT, TWO OTHER HELICOPTERS WERE CURRENTLY IN RANGOON, APPARENTLY BROUGHT HERE FOR THE BELL VISIT. THE BELL REPRESENTATIVES INSPECTED THEM, FLEW THEM, AND FOUND THEM TO BE IN TOP CONDITION.
- TECHNICAL MANUALS ARE UP TO DATE, PROPER TECHNICAL RECORDS ARE KEPT, AND MAINTENANCE GENERALLY SEEMS IMPRESSIVE.
- THERE IS AN ADEQUATE STOCK OF SPARE PARTS, AND THE HELI-ORIENT COMPANY SPARE PARTS CONTRACT ARRANGEMENT SEEMS TO BE FUNCTIONING WITH PT SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS OR DELAYS.
- THE BURMESE ARE CURRENTLY TRYING TO REPAIR TWO ROTOR BLADES WHICH HAVE BULLET HOLES, BUT OTHERWISE THERE HAS BEEN NO BATTLE DAMAGE TO ANY OF THE AIRCRAFT.

4. THE BURMA AIR FORCE REQUESTED BELL TO SEND SALES AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION ON BELL'S ENTIRE PRODUCT LINE. ACCORDING TO THE BELL REPRESENTATIVES, THE BURMESE SEEMED ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN THE MODEL 206B JET RANGER (A MUCH SMALLER AND MORE ECONOMICAL AIRCRAFT THAN THE 205) FOR USE IN TRAINING AND RECONNAISSANCE.

5. THE BURMESE DID NOT DISCUSS WITH THE BELL REPRESENTATIVES SUBSTANTIVE, OPERATIONAL DETAILS RELATED TO THE HELICOPTERS' UTILIZATION.

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